



## Message from VPRA: Dr. Robert Nobles

As we navigate the challenges posed by managing COVID-19 and establishing a “new normal”, the Office of Research Administration remains committed to optimizing research operations. During these times, Emory researchers have made incredible strides towards understanding and treating COVID-19, through more than 500 IRB submissions, 200 publications, and licensing agreements all focused on understanding and resolving the global pandemic. We are proud to have contributed to the Rapid Response Team that facilitated many of these timely efforts. Many lessons were learned from developing an effective rapid response protocol. We plan to take these lessons and apply them to our operations post pandemic. We intend to foster transparency and streamline activities through leveraging and enhancing available Information Technology (IT) solutions. We know well that an efficient IT infrastructure fuels and streamlines operations that facilitates an efficient research enterprise. In this newsletter, you will learn about some of the ways we are continuously receiving feedback and improving ORA procedures with IT solutions.

I am excited to announce the PI Financial Portal, which will allow researchers to access one convenient location to view financial information spanning the entirety of their research portfolio, sponsored and non-sponsored accounts. You can think of the portal as an online bank account statement for research and will be formally rolled out over the next couple of months. We have also launched a myriad of ongoing IT enhancements to our review committee research systems, including eIACUC and eIRB, to bring functionality and clarity to the process. We are also leveraging all available systems and data fields into the Enterprise Data Warehouse, which will enhance our capabilities to produce performance metrics related to our research enterprise.

Collectively, our IT enhancements will facilitate and strengthen continuing efforts to grow internal collaborations through transparency in Mission Metrics (Mission Metrics is ORA’s initiative to identify, improve, and report on internal processes that matter to our researchers and research administrators). Specifically, our mission metrics focus on key performance indicators in volume, quality, and time across the 10 offices that make up ORA. Examples of metrics that are being developed for reporting include award set-up cycle times, processing times for PANs and sub-awards, timeliness of review from the IACUC and IRB, and efficiency within the RAS units. As we continue to develop our IT Roadmap, we pledge to make these indicators visible and keep our processes transparent.

Finally, we would like to introduce Rose Ndegwa and Nicole Tannebaum as Emory’s new export control team. Their first day was July 1. Rose is our incoming export control officer and brings extensive experience in export control management from Kansas State University and Texas A&M. Nicole, who will serve as deputy export control officer, has previously worked with MIT and Georgia Tech as a specialist of export control compliance. Their roles will entail capacity-building and ensuring that faculty and staff are protected by a robust infrastructure of exporting and importing items controlled by the federal government. Rose and Nicole are dedicated to identifying threats and have begun the process of conducting a risk assessment to build a foundation for these efforts. More information will be shared in future editions of this newsletter.

Respectfully,

Robert Nobles, DrPH, MPH, CIP  
Vice President for Research Administration



## PI Financial Portal to Provide Overview for Faculty

Have you ever had a question about your financial portfolio, but were unsure who to ask about a speed type or the balance of a project? Have you dreamed of a “snapshot” where information about your awards and projects are consolidated for easy viewing and access?

We have heard these questions and ORA is committed to acting on faculty feedback. Teams from across the University are actively developing a PI Financial Portal to provide your complete sponsored and non-sponsored financial portfolio on-demand in one convenient location. Upon deployment, researchers will log into Emory Business Intelligence (EBI) for their customizable dashboard and complete portfolio.



### FAQs:

#### *Will I be able to see sponsored and non-sponsored projects?*

Yes. The tool will present both sponsored and non-sponsored projects in which you are listed as an Award PI or a Project PI.

#### *What information will be shown in the dashboard?*

- Grants and Contracts
  - Projects ending within 90 days
  - Employees paid by projects ending in 90 days
  - Number of projects with a direct available balance
  - Active projects with a deficit balance
- Effort Reporting for Investigators and Research Staff
- Pending Proposals
- Non-Sponsored Projects

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## Fringe Rates for FY21 Are Now Available on the Finance Website

Fringe rates for FY21 are available on the finance website:  
<https://finance.emory.edu/home/accounting/cost-accounting/fringe-benefit-rates.html>

Federal rates have been submitted but we have yet to receive approval of them. Please use the proposed fringe rates on any new proposal submissions. We normally receive approval for rates towards the end of the summer. This year may see a further delay due to COVID-19.

Please contact James Goff ([jbgoff@emory.edu](mailto:jbgoff@emory.edu)) or Charet Wynn ([cewynn@emory.edu](mailto:cewynn@emory.edu)) with any questions.



## Process Improvement Journal: MTA/DUA Processing

Do you want to collaborate and share that hot new cell line or antibody with your colleagues across the country? Have you been asked to sign an access agreement to get insights from the last clinical study from your friend's group at another university?



If so, you have likely worked with the Office for Technology Transfer (OTT) to negotiate Material Transfer Agreements (MTAs) or Data Use Agreements (DUAs) with the non-Emory investigators and their institutions that are often required for these collaborations. OTT is currently working with the Dragon Team (Strategic Operations) to optimize the process for negotiating and executing these contracts in hopes to reduce the number of "outlier" contracts that require extended processing times, and to increase communication and transparency with researchers throughout the contracting process. Included in this newsletter is a process map of the steps taken to negotiate each contract that enters the office.

OTT has been working behind the scenes and is close to launching Contract Connect, an online submission system for new MTAs and DUAs that will allow researchers to more efficiently submit contracts to OTT for review and to reduce the reliance on email, which often slows down the process. By streamlining the review and negotiation process and launching the new submission system, OTT will ensure that Emory researchers can quickly and easily collaborate with external collaborators and their institutions.

Until Contract Connect is up and running, researchers should continue to use the MTA/DUA-specific email address ([OTT-MTA@emory.edu](mailto:OTT-MTA@emory.edu)) for all relevant correspondence. Additionally, researchers can speed review by including relevant information in the applicable MTA or DUA questionnaire when submitting contracts to OTT. These forms can be found at: <http://www.ott.emory.edu/forms/index.html>

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## Significant Information

Environmental Health and Safety Office

- [BioRAFT Training and Registration Updates](#)
- [Returning to Laboratory Research at Lower Density](#)

Office of Research Administration

- [Returning to Research Guidance and Updates Added to ORA COVID-19 Page](#)

Research Grants and Contracts

- [Provisional Account Number \(PAN\) Distribution Process Streamlined](#)

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We welcome your questions, comments or concerns.  
Please email Dr. Robert Nobles at [robert.e.nobles@emory.edu](mailto:robert.e.nobles@emory.edu).  
Share your ORA experience with us using the [Faculty Feedback Form](#)

*Partnering with Researchers to Change the World*

